

Message Text

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ACTION SS-15

INFO OCT-01 SSO-00 ADP-00 RSR-01 RSC-01 /018 W

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O 190450 Z MAY 73

FM USMISSION USUN NY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8069

UNCLAS USUN 1903

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: OPERATIONS CENTER FOR SECRETARY' S PARTY OVIP (ROGERS,
WILLIAM P)

SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES SUMMARY MAY 19

THE WATERGATE HEARINGS AND RELATED STORIES ALMOST COMPLETELY
DOMINATED PAGE ONE OF THE NEW YORK TIMES MAY 19, WHICH
CARRIED A SIX COLUMN BANNER SAYING: " MCCORD TESTIFIED
EX- WHITE HOUSE AIDE OFFERED CLEMENCY IN NAME OF NIXON;
DENIAL ISSUED BY PRESIDENT' S OFFICE". AND, IN SMALLER
TYPE: " PRESIDENT WON' T QUIT, ZIEGLER SAYS WHEN ASKED".
ARCHIBALD COX' S APPOINTMENT AS WATERGATE SPECIAL PROSECUTOR
WAS A TWO- COLUMN OFF- LEAD. INSIDE, FOUR AND A HALF PAGES
WERE DEVOTED TO TRANSCRIPTS OF TESTIMONY AND STATEMENTS, AND
ARTICLES OF ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION.

THE PAPER' S REPORT THAT ASSURANCES WERE GIVEN TO MCCORD BY
FORMER WHITE HOUSE AIDE JOHN CAULFIELD THAT HE HAD THE HIGHEST
WHITE HOUSE PROTECTION LEAD THE PAPER AND TOOK UP MOST OF
THE WATERGATE SPACE. A WHITE HOUSE DENIAL OF ANY PRESIDENTIAL
KNOWLEDGE OF THIS WAS HIGH UP IN THE STORY. OTHER DEVELOPMENTS
AS PRINTED BY THE TIMES WERE:

1) RONALD ZIEGLER DENIED FIRMLY THAT NIXON HAD ANY INTENTION
OF RESIGNING. " THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES", HE
WAS QUOTED AS SAYING, " HAS A LOT TO DO AND A LOT TO ACCOMPLISH
IN THE SECOND TERM, AND HE FULLY INTENDS TO DO THAT". HE
ADDED THAT MCCORD' S STATEMENTS WERE " BASED ON TOTAL
HEARSAY". (HEARSAY WAS A SUBJECT OF ONE OF THE PAPER' S
EDITORIALS.) THE TIMES STORY UNDER AN R. W. APPLE JR. BYLINE
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CONTINUED: " THE MCCORD TESTIMONY, WHICH HAD BEEN FORESHADOWED
BY EARLIER PRESS REPORTS, HIT THE WHITE HOUSE STAFF HARD
AS IT POURED FROM THEIR TELEVISION SETS. A MIDDLE- LEVEL
STAFF MEMBER SAID SOMBERLY THAT HE HOPED ' THEY' LL TURN OVER

THE WHOLE BUCKET OF GORE SOON' TO END THE ' AWFUL TENSION'".

2) SENATOR SYMINGTON SAID THAT NEW DATE SUBMITTED BY GENERAL WALTERS, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE CIA, MADE IT EVEN MORE DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO " VISUALIZE" THAT THE PRESIDENT KNEW NOTHING ABOUT WHITE HOUSE ATTEMPTS TO USE THE AGENCY TO COVER UP WATERGATE.

3) ARCHIBALD COX REPORTEDLY ACCEPTED RICHARDSON' S OFFER TO BECOME THE SPECIAL WATERGATE AFFAIR PROSECUTOR. EDITORIALY, THE TIMES CALLED THE APPOINTMENT " A BELATED IF HOPEFUL START ON THE AWESOME TASK OF RESTORING PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN THE ADMINISTRATION' S RETURN TO THE RULE OF LAW... THERE MUST BE SOME WRY MEMORIES AT THE WHITE HOUSE TODAY OF THE NEW PROSECUTOR WHEN HE WAS FULL- TIME LEADER OF THE KENNEDY BRAIN- TRUST FOR THE 1960 ELECTION VICTORY OVER RICHARD M. NIXON ... IF UNDER THE GUIDELINES, HE IS SOMEWHAT LESS THAN INDEPENDENT IN HIS OFFICIAL STATUS, PROFESSOR COX HAS PROMISED TO BE COMPLETELY INDEPENDENT IN SPIRIT -- AND THIS IS THE MORE IMPORTANT NEED OF THE COUNTRY NOW".

THE TIMES RAN ANOTHER EDITORIAL RELATED TO WATERGATE HEADED " PITFALLS OF HEARSAY", WHICH SAID: " SENATOR ERVIN AND HIS SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ARE SHOWING ONLY ELEMENTARY PRUDENCE AND FAIRNESS IN WARNING THAT GUILT CANNOT BE ESTABLISHED BY HEARSAY. THERE ARE OTHER THINGS THAT SHOULD NOT BE ACCEPTED ON HEARSAY, TOO -- SUCH AS ORDERS OR INSTRUCTIONS ALLEGEDLY FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. THE NATION WOULD HAVE BEEN SPARED MUCH OF ITS CURRENT AGONY IF ALL ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS HAD SHOWN SIMILAR PRUDENCE ...

" NOT ONLY WERE JAMES W. MCCORD AND THE OTHER WATERGATE PARTICIPANTS PRODDED INTO ACTION ON THE HEARSAY THAT THE PRESIDENT OR THE ATTORNEY GENERAL SOUGHT THEIR COOPERATION. IT IS MORE OMINOUS THAT SENIOR PUBLIC SERVANTS HOLDING OFFICES OF HIGH TRUST IN DIFFERENT GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS WERE READY TO ACT ON HEARING THE SIMPLE WORDS ' THE PRESIDENT WANTS...'".
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NO MENTION WAS MADE IN THE EARLY EDITIONS OF THE TIMES OF SECRETARY ROGERS' SOUTH AMERICAN TRIP.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 02 APR 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 MAY 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973USUNN01903
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: USUN NY
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730559/abqceafj.tel
Line Count: 100
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: n/a
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: shawdg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 OCT 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26-Oct-2001 by kuehnbc0>; APPROVED <05-Feb-2002 by shawdg>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEW YORK TIMES SUMMARY MAY 19
TAGS: OPERATIONS CENTER FOR SECRETARY' S PARTY OVIP (ROGERS,
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005